COURSE TITLE/SECTION: SOCW 7356 (18780) Social Work Practice with Groups in Clinical Settings

TIME: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 6:00pm – 9:00pm

FACULTY: Travis J. Courville, LCSW  OFFICE HOURS: by appointment

E-mail: tjcourville@comcast.net  Phone: 281-814-8213  FAX: 281-437-2587

I. Course

A. Catalog Description
   Theories and concepts of interventions with small groups emphasizing roles and skills of social workers in a variety of clinical settings.

B. Purpose
   This is an elective course which focuses on theories and concepts of clinical social work practice with small groups. The course is designed to help students understand and practice group work within a multi-social-cultural perspective.

II. Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

1. formulate a clinical assessment of the group and the group members’ biopsychosocial functioning by applying key concepts and principles of interpersonal dynamics and group processes;
2. formulate a diagnostic summary of group processes at different phases of the group’s development;
3. critically analyze the role of the group leader and its impact on power and power inequity in social work practice with groups;
4. identify the ongoing dynamics of groups from various theoretical frameworks (i.e. strengths-based, systems, behavioral, psychodynamic, etc.);
5. assess the professional-client relationship and its impact on the helping process in working with groups;
6. analyze the impact of class, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual preference and culture on the interactional processes within a group;
7. use critical thinking in formulating and evaluating appropriate strategies of evidence-based group intervention;
8. demonstrate understanding of such key group dynamic concepts as: contracting, confidentiality, cohesiveness, confrontation, conflict, scapegoating, group norms, catharsis, universality, transference-countertransference, alliances, group composition, size, duration, feedback, and termination.

III. Course Content

See attached topical course outline for specific content to be taught in this course.

IV. Course Structure

Class sessions will be a combination of lecture, discussion, student presentations, and experiential exercises. Lecture material is intended to supplement, not review, the assigned readings. Because the experiential component is a major source of learning, students are expected to attend and participate in all class activities. Guest speakers and audiovisual resources may be a part of the educational experience.

V. Textbooks

Required:


VI. Course Requirements

A. Reading Assignments

The attached course outline contains weekly topics with required reading assignments. Additional reading assignments may be given during the semester.

B. Written Assignments

(1) An oral PowerPoint presentation with a slide handout on a specific topic in group work. The slide handout (six slides per page) will include at least three salient points and an annotated bibliography of references of a topic agreed
upon during the initial class. A copy the handout for each person in class is expected. Due date will be the class time the topic is scheduled for discussion.

(2) An 8-10 page paper entitled, “Toward a personal philosophy of group work”. This paper is intended for the student to articulate the theoretical application of social work practice in groups with one’s style, principles, and philosophy of helping others. The paper will address at least assessment of group dynamics, strategies of interventions, professional-client relationships, and personal experience with groups. Do not consider bibliography or footnotes as part of the required 8-10 pages. The paper is due on the last day of class.

C. Exams

There will be one mid-semester exam and one quiz. Format of the exam will be multiple choices and open-ended questions about major topics covered in the classroom and textbook. The quiz will be multiple choices and essay. There will be no final exam.

D. Class Attendance

Class attendance and participation are expected and calculated into the course grade. Students can only use laptops for note taking. Any other use will be considered nonparticipation.

VII. Evaluation and Grading

Grading will be based on class attendance and participation, including evidence of having read assignments (45%); written and oral assignment for class discussion (15%); term paper (25%); and one exam & one quiz (15%).

The following grading scale will be used:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96-100% of the points</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92-95.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-91.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-87.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83.9%</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>76-79.9%</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>72-75.9%</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>68-71.9%</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>64-67.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 64%</td>
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</tbody>
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Policy on grades of I (Incompletes): Students are responsible for following University of Houston’s policy regarding incomplete course work.

VIII. Consultation

I plan to be available before each class at 5:30 p.m. in the classroom. In addition,
students can contact me by cell phone (281-814-8213) or email. You can also
leave me a note in my GCSW mailbox for an appointment.

IX. Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

See course outline below for specific content and assignment schedule for this
course.

X. Bibliography

The attached bibliography provides additional information on course content.

Addendum: Whenever possible, and in accordance with 504/ADA guidelines, the
University of Houston will attempt to provide reasonable academic accommodations to
students who request and require them. Please call 713-743-5400 for more assistance.

Please note that these instructions may be altered as needed.

SOCW 7356: SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH GROUPS IN CLINICAL SETTINGS

Course Outline
(Note: This outline may be revised during the semester as needed.)

Jun 05  Introductions and course overview; history of group interventions,
         mental health & social work; different theoretical orientations

Jun 06  Therapeutic factors; therapist - client relationship
        Yalom: 1, 2 & 4
        Garvin: 1

        Additional reading:
        AGPA Practice Guidelines for Group Psychotherapy, “Creating successful
        therapy groups”, page 7

Jun 07  Early stages of group therapy; goal setting; administration of groups
        Yalom: 5, 10 & 11

        Additional reading:
        AGPA Practice Guidelines for Group Psychotherapy, “Preparation and
        pre-group training”, page 25
Jun 12  Interpersonal learning approach; process vs. outcome  
   Yalom: 3, 6  
   Garvin: 2

Jun 13  Specialized groups in different settings; co-therapy; TOPIC DISCUSSIONS  
   Garvin: 11 & 13

   Additional reading:
   

Jun 14  Inpatient group therapy; brief group therapy; TOPIC DISCUSSIONS  
   Garvin: 7

Jun 19  TOPIC DISCUSSIONS

Jun 20  Psychodrama, TOPIC DISCUSSIONS  
   Yalom: 14 &15  
   Garvin: 11 & 13

Jun 21  MID-SEMESTER EXAM

Jun 26  Sexuality issues in group; class; cultural/ethnic issues: TOPIC DISCUSSIONS  
   Yalom: 12 & 13  
   Garvin: 3

   Additional reading:
   


Jun 27  Research in group; TOPIC DISCUSSIONS  
   Garvin: 26 & 27

   Additional readings:
   
Jun 28  Training of group leaders; recent developments in group work; 
TOPIC DISCUSSIONS
Yalom: 17 & Appendix

Jul 03  Ethical considerations, TOPIC DISCUSSIONS 
Garvin: 5

Additional reading:

AGPA Practice Guidelines for Group Psychotherapy, “Reducing adverse outcomes and the ethical practice of group psychotherapy”, page 47


Jul 05  Termination and review of educational objectives; FINAL PAPER DUE 

Additional reading:


Additional readings:

SOCW 7356: Social Work Practice with Groups in Clinical Settings
Summer 2012
Bibliography


American Group Psychotherapy Association (2006) Principles of Group Psychotherapy,


Northen, H. (1998) Ethical dilemmas in social work with groups. *Social Work with Groups*, 21 (1/2), 5-17


New York: Guilford


